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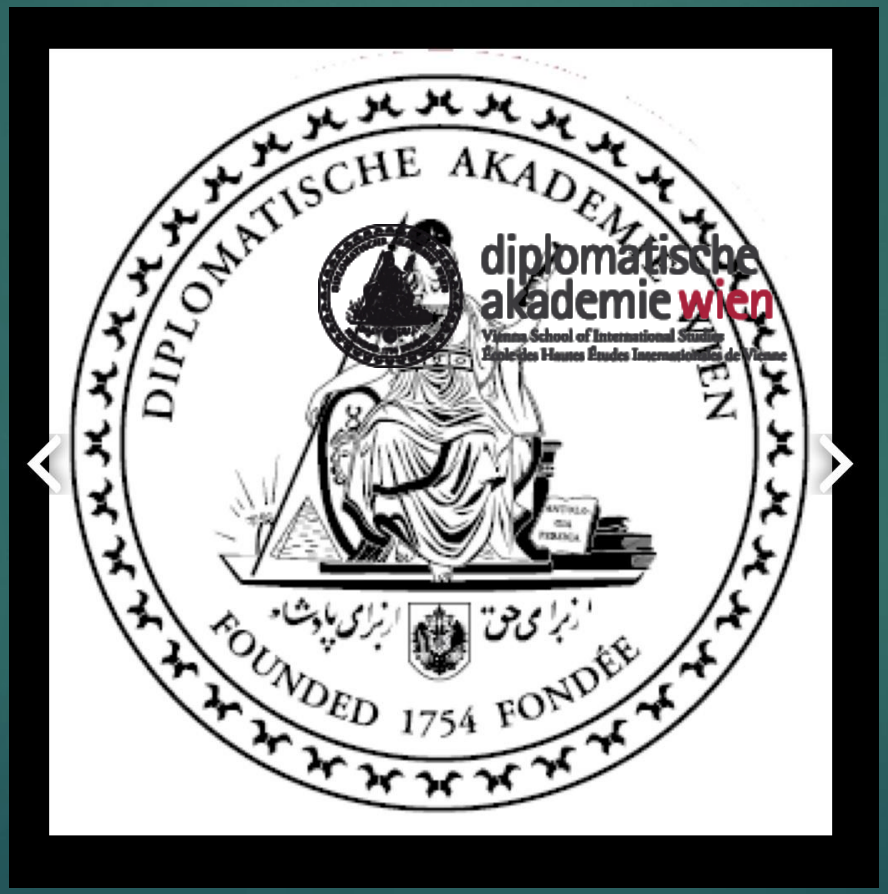
École des Hautes Études Internationales de Vienne



The Soft Power of Albania
Cultural heritage and modern politics

Vienna Diplomatic Academy
29.11.2018

A talk by Mal Berisha
Former Ambassador of Albania to the United Kingdom 2012 – 2015

Albania

Albania is domestically called Shqiperi or the Land of Eagles.

Albanian is an Indo-European language spoken by 10 million Albanian in Albania, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Greece, Italy and many other countries.

Albania is the only country in the word surrounded by territories populated by its own people;

- It has been ruled by Romanians, Byzantines, ottomans, occupied by Italians, Germans and then, it suffered 46 year communist dictatorship;
- It was proclaimed an independent state on November 1912, leaving outside half of its territory;
- In 1992 Albania got rid of the communism regime and took the way of democracy in a Parliamentarian regime.

Strong connections between Albania and Austria

* **Ismail Qemali**, founder of the modern Albania was supported by Austria;

* **The best Albanian professionals were educated in Austria**

* **Austria – an advocate of Albania towards European Integration.**

Neue Burg Collection of Arms and Armour of Scanderbeg in Viena

Johann Georg Von Hahn, Austrian Consul, remembered as the father of Albanian studies, gives a detailed and informative rendering of his journey through central Albania, in 1850.

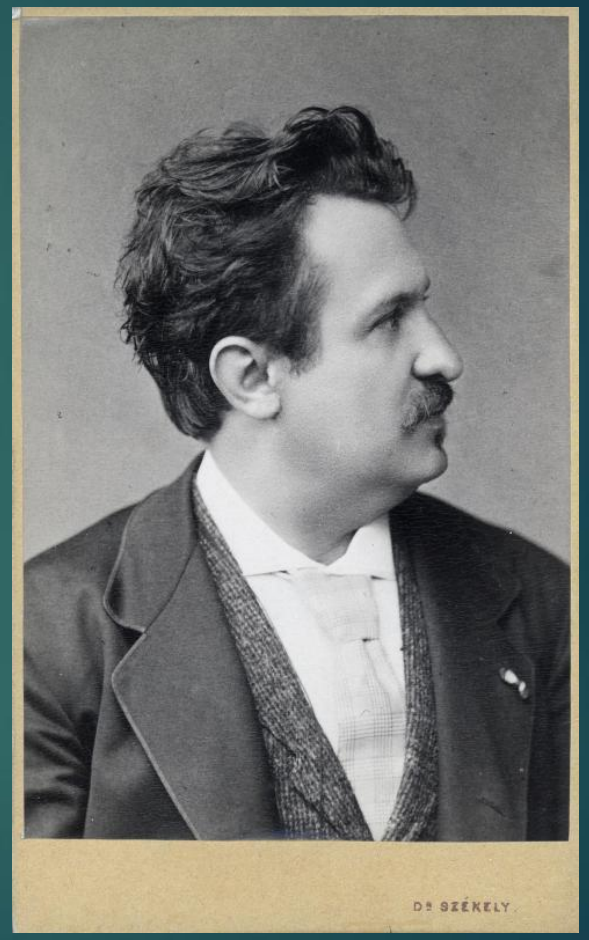
Norbert Jokl (1877 – 1942) an Austrian of Jewish descent – founder of Albanology.

Theodor Ippen *(1861-1935), Austrian scholar and diplomat who served at the Austro-Hungarian consulate in Shkodra from 1884 to 1893 and from 1895 to 1905, and travelled extensively in Ottoman Albania.*

His legacy is a large description of the Albanian nation in many fields.

Josef Székely - First Photographer in Albania and the Southwest Balkans

On his trip through Albania, Kosova and Macedonia in the autumn of 1863, with Johann Georg von Hahn, the Viennese photographer, Josef Székely (ca. 1838-1901), is said to have taken some of the first photos of Albania.
The collection consists of fifty photos, including views of Shkodra, Prizren, Ohrid and Monastir (Bitola).



With HE Ambassador Emil Brix in London GRODEK (Georg Trakl)

GRODEK (Georg Trakl)

Edhe drurët qajnë në muzgjet vjeshtore,
Edhe armët vrastare edhe fushat pjellore,
Ujërat e errëta kaltëroshe të liqeneve mbi të cilat
edhe më errësisht ,
Vërtitet dielli si i trembur, tinëzisht.
Luftëtarë që vdesin, këngë vajtimtare,
Nga gojëshqyerja e luftës shkatrrimtare.
Qetësisht atje, në lugun shelgjor,
Re-kuqja mban të fjetur zemërimin njerëzor.
Gjaku i derdhur mblidhet në ftohtësi hënore,
Tëra rrugët të çojnë tek dumat mortore.
Nën fijet e arta vjedhacake dritë hëne dhe yje
Motra e hijes tani shton trishtim qetësie.
Koka të përgjakura, shpirtëra heronjësh,
Butësisht fyej të errët zërash vjeshtor në zë krojsh,
O fatzitnj krenar! Altar të bronxtë atje lart ku
Qëndroni,
Sot një dhimbje e thellë ushqen flakët e zjarrta,
Kujtoni!
Për nipërit e palindur ende, Mendoni!

Perktheu: Mal Berisha

General Concepts of the Soft Power

The Soft Power is the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments.

It arises from the attractiveness of a country's culture, political ideals, and policies.
When you can get others to admire your ideals and to want what you want, then you can get things to move in your direction.

Joseph S. Ney, Jr.

Winning the peace is harder than winning the war, and soft power is essential to winning the peace.

Soft power affects the behavior without commanding.

Cultural contacts place a great importance as means of combating negative impressions about the country that mark so much of the public opinion.

“SOFT POWER” – The Public Diplomacy in practice:

- Highlighting the contribution of Albanians to western civilization through the history, National Hero, George Kastrioti Skanderbeg,

- Celebrating the legacy of St Mother Theresa,

- Raising global awareness on the noble values of Besa, religious tolerance and the rescue of Jews during WWII,

- Promoting Albanian culture through music and arts,

- Presenting our ancient history and heritage through the publications of foreign and Albanian authors,

- Fostering bilateral relations through public diplomacy.

Soft Power:

Attraction – agenda – setting

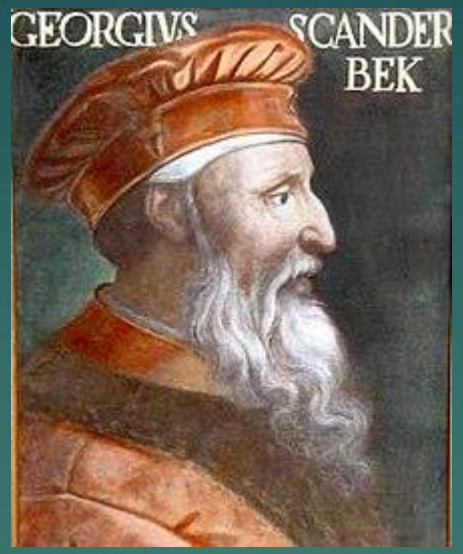
Values – culture – policies – institutions

Public diplomacy – bilateral and multilateral diplomacy

Highlighting the

Contribution of Albanians to Western Civilization through the activities of an Embassy

Example – Albanian Embassy in London 2012-2015



Celebrating the Legacy of National Hero, George Kastrioti Skanderbeg

550th memorial year – 1468 - 2018

George Kastrioti **SKANDERBEG** (1405 – 1468)

Invincible Albanian National Hero Defender of Western Civilization

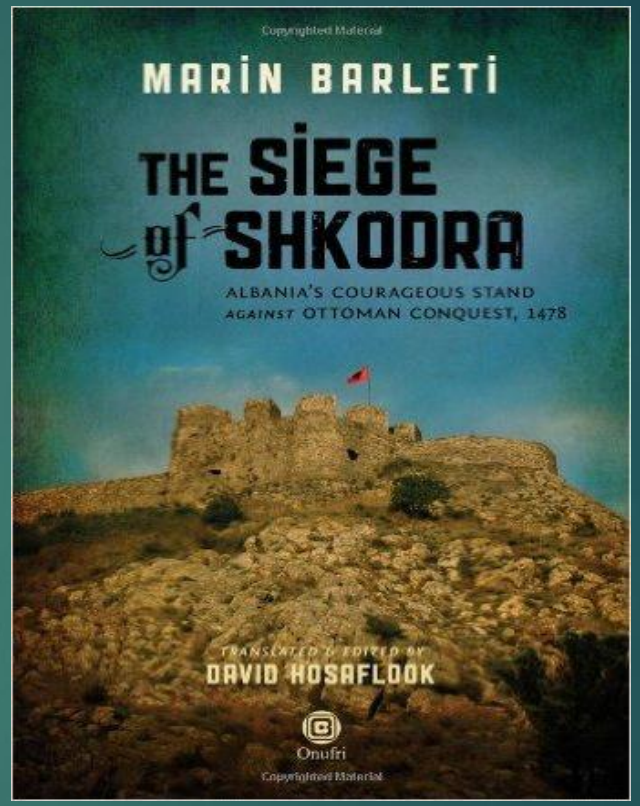
Unveiling of Skanderbeg's bust in London

To mark the 100th Anniversary of Independence, the Embassy of Albania placed the Bust of the Albanian National Hero, Skanderbeg at the address: **113 Inverness Terrace, London W2 6JH.** The unveiling ceremony was attended by the Lord Mayor of Westminster, Susie Burbridge, local authorities and the Albanian community in London and elsewhere.

Albanian diplomats place the bust of Skanderbeg in the Arbereshi village of Munxhufuni, Italy

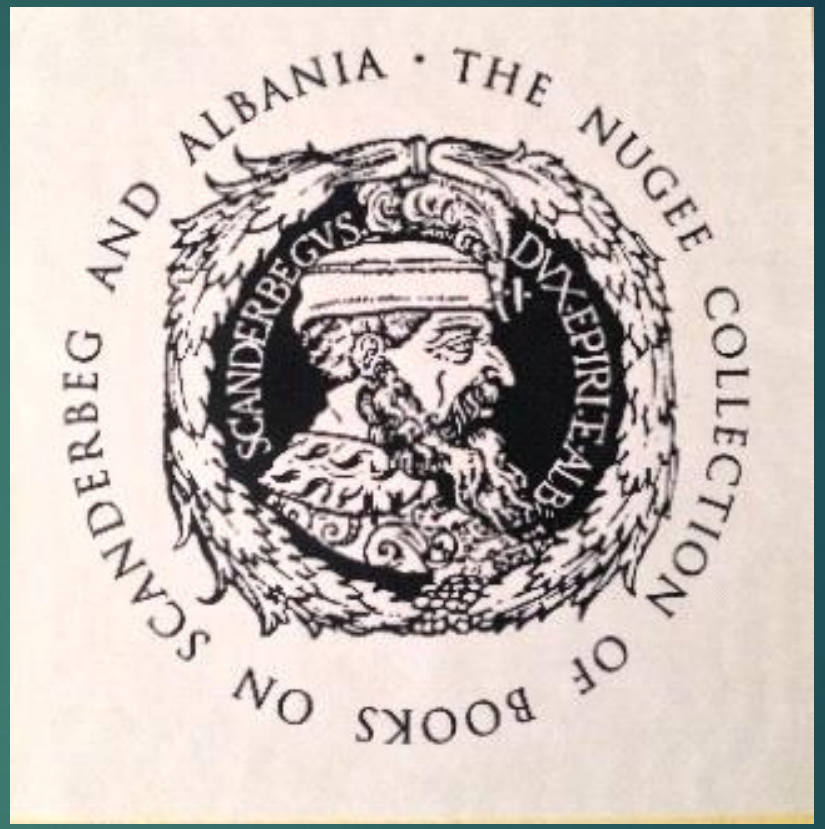
Another bust of Skanderbeg is placed and unveiled by the Albanian diplomats accredited in London and Rome at **Skenderbeg Square, Munxhufuni, Italy,** in the presence of regional and local authorities.

Marin Barleti's "The Siege of Shkodra" English edition launched at the Albanian Embassy in London



The Embassy hosts the book launch of **The Siege of Shkodra** translated by David Hosaflook, an American who has been living in Albania since 27 years.

A collection of antique books on Skanderbeg



The Embassy hosts an extraordinary exhibition of the Nugge Collection: Original antique books on of **Skanderbeg from the XV - XIX century.**

The bust of Scanderbeg in London's Google Map

Memorial

Memorials | Subjects | This day | Lost memorials | Puzzle corner | Map | Types

Credit for this entry to:
Alan Patient of
www.plaquesoflondon.co.uk

Tweet 0 Like 8

Bust: George Skanderbeg

Erection date: 28/11/2012

Inscription

{Front of plinth:}
George Kastrioti Skanderbeg, 1405 - 1468, invincible Albanian national hero, defender of western civilization.

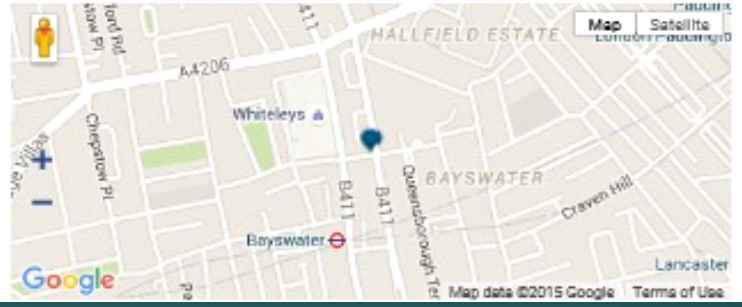
{Right of plinth:}
Placed on: 28.11.2012, Initiated by: David Lloyd, Opened by Mal Berisha Rep. of Albania, Cllr Robert Davis DL and Cllr Susie Burbridge. Supported by: Sebra and Bra, crafted by Kreshnik Xhiku.

The unveiling took place on the 100th anniversary of Albanian independence.

Site: Lady Samuel's Garden (2 memorials)

W2, Corner of Inverness Terrace and Porchester Gardens

Go to map of other memorials in this area



Subjects commemorated

George Skanderbeg
Albanian national hero. Born George Kastrioti (or Castriota) Skanderbeg and a...
Read More

Created by

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BRA
Westminster City Council informs us that this acronym stands for 'Bayswater R...
Read More

SEBRA
South East Bayswater Residents Association. A group formed to protect the spe...
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Mal Berisha
Ambassador
Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Albania. Born in Tropoja. He ...
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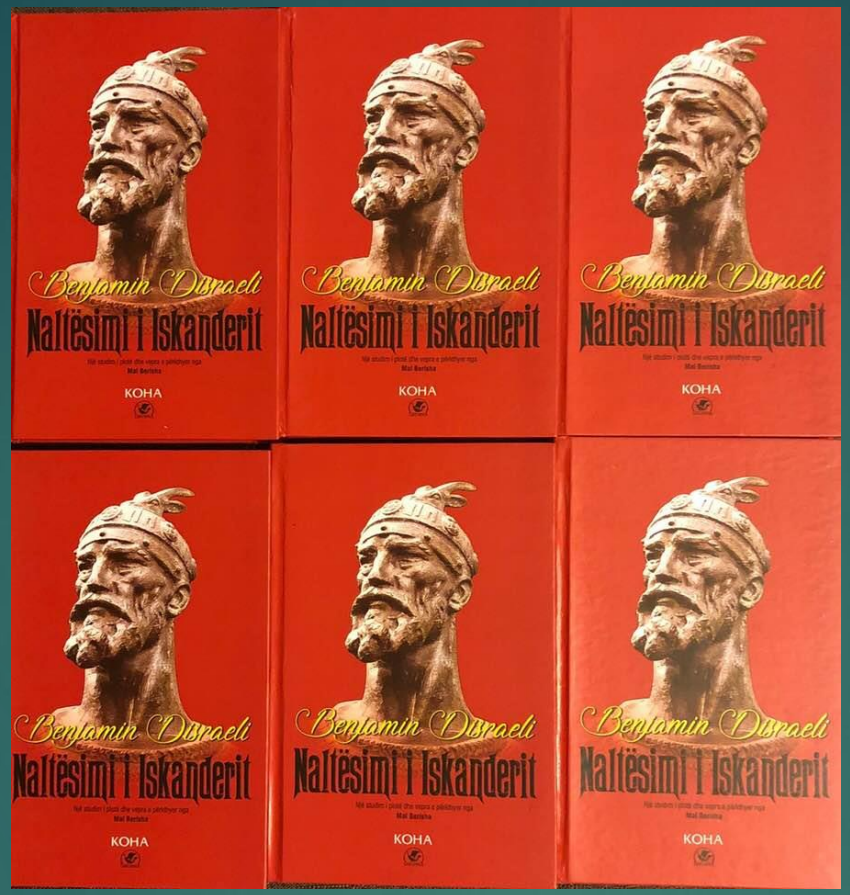
Susie Burbridge
Westminster City Councillor.
Read More

Robert Davis
Solicitor and Westminster Councillor. Mayor of Westminster 1996/97.
Read More



Benjamin Disraeli “The Rise of Iskander” (Translated in Albanian)- 550 anniversary of the Hero

Nobel Peace Prize St. Mother Teresa – A Famous Albanian

The Missionaries of Charity, a Roman Catholic congregation of women dedicated to helping the poor. Considered one of the 20th Century's greatest humanitarians, she was canonized as Saint Teresa of Calcutta in 2016.

"By blood, I am Albanian.
By citizenship, an Indian.
By faith, I am a Catholic nun.
As to my calling, I belong to the world.
As to my heart, I belong entirely to the Heart of Jesus.

Two Albanians by origin who led two great countries, Mehmet Ali Pasha of Egypt and Francesco Crispi, co-fighter of Garibaldi, two times Prime Minister of Italy

“

Mehmet Ali Pasha

(1769 – 1849)

Francesco Crispi

(1818 – 1901)

”

ALBANIAN BESA

Based on the highest moral values of the ***Albanian BESA***, hundreds of Jews were unconditionally sheltered by common Albanians in mostly rural areas of the country.

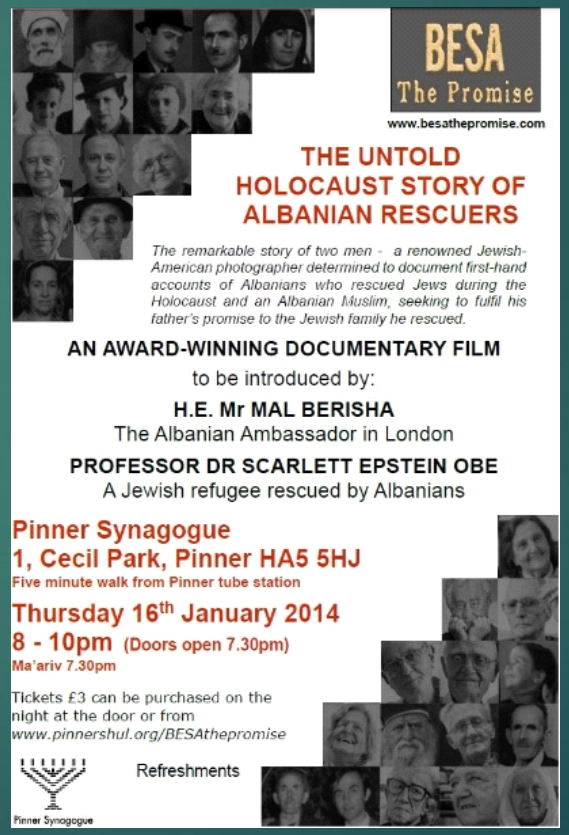
73 ALBANIAN RIGHTEOUS AMONG THE NATIONS

73 Albanian families who saved the Albanian Jews as well as others from Germany, Yugoslavia, Austria, Greece, Macedonia, have their names engraved at the Yad Vashem Memorial Museum in Jerusalem, Righteous among the Nations.

Evening at the Pinner Synagogue – Remembering the martyrs of Warsaw's Ghetto

"*Resistance and Rescue*": Attending Yom Hashoah– an evening to mark the 70th anniversary of the uprising of Warsaw's Ghetto.

Prof. Scarlet Epstein a witness of the Albanian care and hospitality to the Jewish people who did find shelter in Albania after *Kristallnacht*



BESA
The Promise
www.besathepromise.com

THE UNTOLD HOLOCAUST STORY OF ALBANIAN RESCUERS

The remarkable story of two men - a renowned Jewish-American photographer determined to document first-hand accounts of Albanians who rescued Jews during the Holocaust and an Albanian Muslim, seeking to fulfil his father's promise to the Jewish family he rescued.

AN AWARD-WINNING DOCUMENTARY FILM

to be introduced by:

H.E. Mr MAL BERISHA
The Albanian Ambassador in London

PROFESSOR DR SCARLETT EPSTEIN OBE
A Jewish refugee rescued by Albanians

Pinner Synagogue
1, Cecil Park, Pinner HA5 5HJ
Five minute walk from Pinner tube station

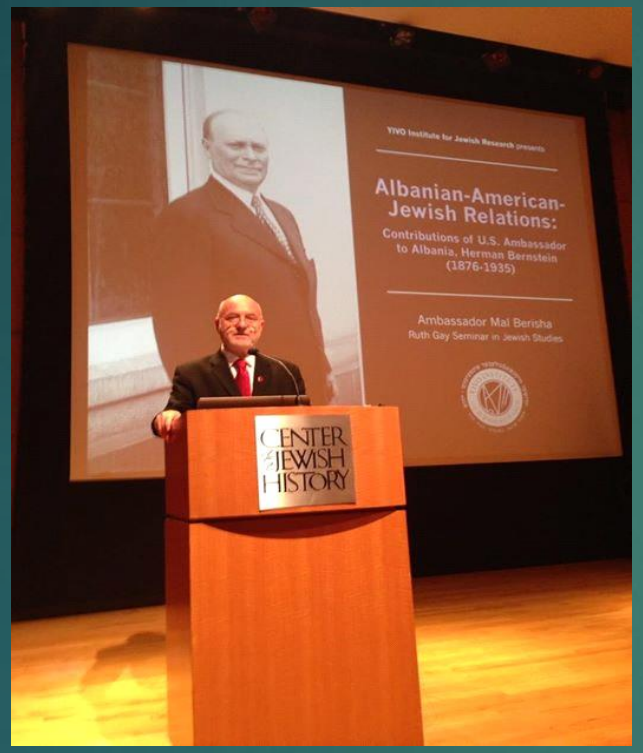
Thursday 16th January 2014
8 - 10pm (Doors open 7.30pm)
Ma'ariv 7.30pm

Tickets £3 can be purchased on the night at the door or from *www.pinnershul.org/BESAthepromise*

Refreshments

Pinner Synagogue

A talk at the YIVO INSTITUTE FOR JEWISH RESEARCH, in New York



A talk on Albanian-Jewish relations at **YIVO Institute** for **Jewish Research, New York City** attended by leaders of the American Jewish communities, researchers, scholars and Albanian – Americans in the US.

In Memorial Days In London — Albanian *BESA* was often honored by Jewish organizations.

BESA – THE PROMISE, a film that was shown to many synagogues in London.

A tree planted in Jerusalem symbolizes the extraordinary gratitude for the brave acts of the Albanian people who sheltered and saved Jewish refugees during Holocaust.

A talk in the US Embassy in London on the life of Jewish – American Diplomat, Herman Bernstein

Embassies of

Albania Israel Lithuania United States

The Ambassador of the United States of America
in association with
the Ambassadors of Albania, Israel and Lithuania
requests the pleasure of the company of

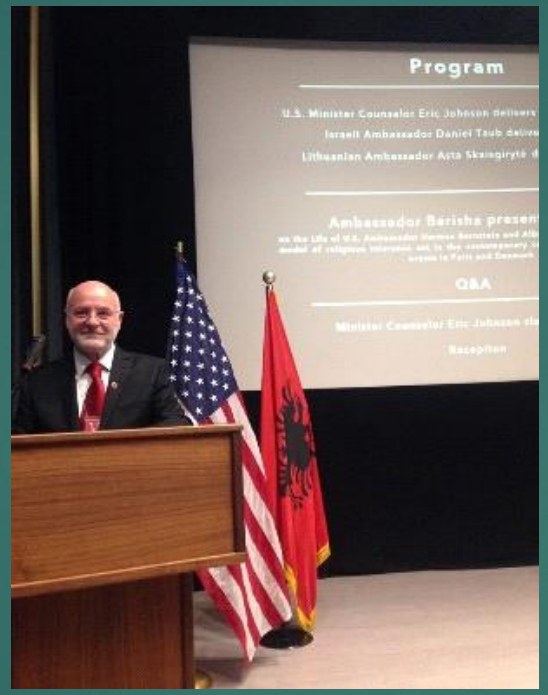
.....

at a talk
by Ambassador Mal Berisha of the Republic of Albania
entitled, "Life of U.S. Ambassador Herman Bernstein
and Albanian Jewish Relations as a model of religious tolerance
set in the contemporary context
of the recent tragic events in Paris and Denmark"
followed by a reception.

on June 4, 2015
from 6.00 to 7.30 p.m.

R.S.V.P by May 20, 2015, latest

American Embassy
24 Grosvenor Square
London W1K 6AH
Dress: Business attire

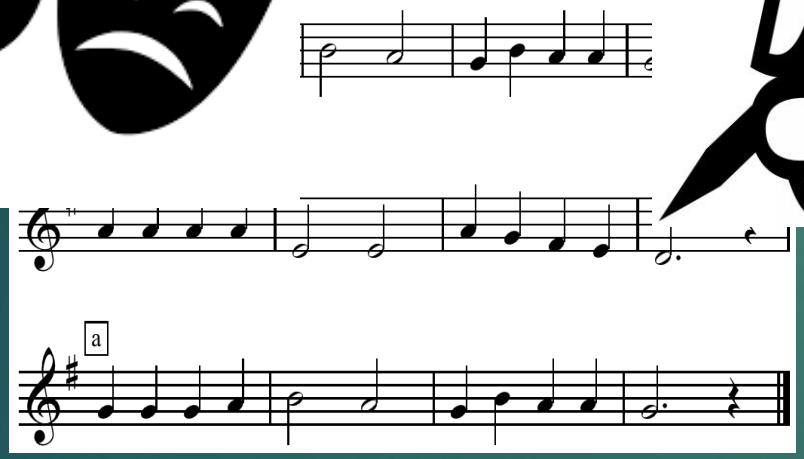


The Ambassador of the United States of America in association with the Ambassadors of Albania, Israel and Lithuania host a talk on the life of US Ambassador Herman Bernstein and Albanian-Jewish relations as a model of religious tolerance at the US Embassy in London.

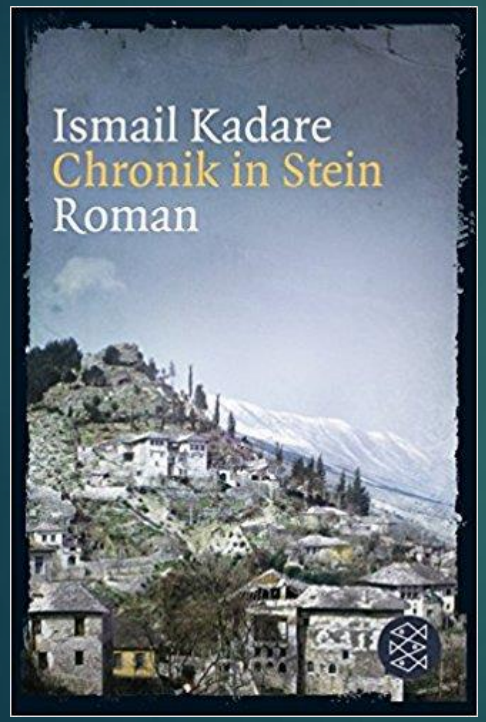
Albanians – A Nation that does not know Anti – Semitism

- Albania e model of religious tolerance and the total absence of anti – Semitism
- Events in Pennsylvania – 12 Jews killed in an anti – Semitist attack.
- The anti- Semitism still exist. We strongly condemn it!

Promoting Albanian culture through music and arts



Great Albanian Writer Ismail Kadare – translated in 46 foreign languages



The Albanian National Theatre performed for the first time in its 70 years history at the "*Shakespeare's Globe Theatre*", in London.

The Albanian polyphonic music PROTECTED BY UNESCO: A Talk at the Albanian Embassy

Dr Eckhart Pistrick, a lecturer of Ethnomusicology at Martin Luther Halle University, gave a talk about the Albanian polyphony.

British Composer Roxanna Panufnik in BBC Radio 3 and Tirana Academy of Arts

The Embassy of Albania organized a performance in Tirana of

“Autumn in Albania”

Composed by Roxanna Panufnik.

The composer attended the premiere.

This piece was played previously by BBC Symphonic Orchestra and famous British violinist, Tasmine Little.

NOTES ON ALBANIA, FIRST EDITION - Royal College of Music

The Albanian Embassy organized a classical concert in London to promote its country through the performance of internationally acclaimed Albanian artists such as the soprano Ermonela Jaho, Arlinda Morava and violinist Alda Dizdari.

The British Youth choir sings in Albanian

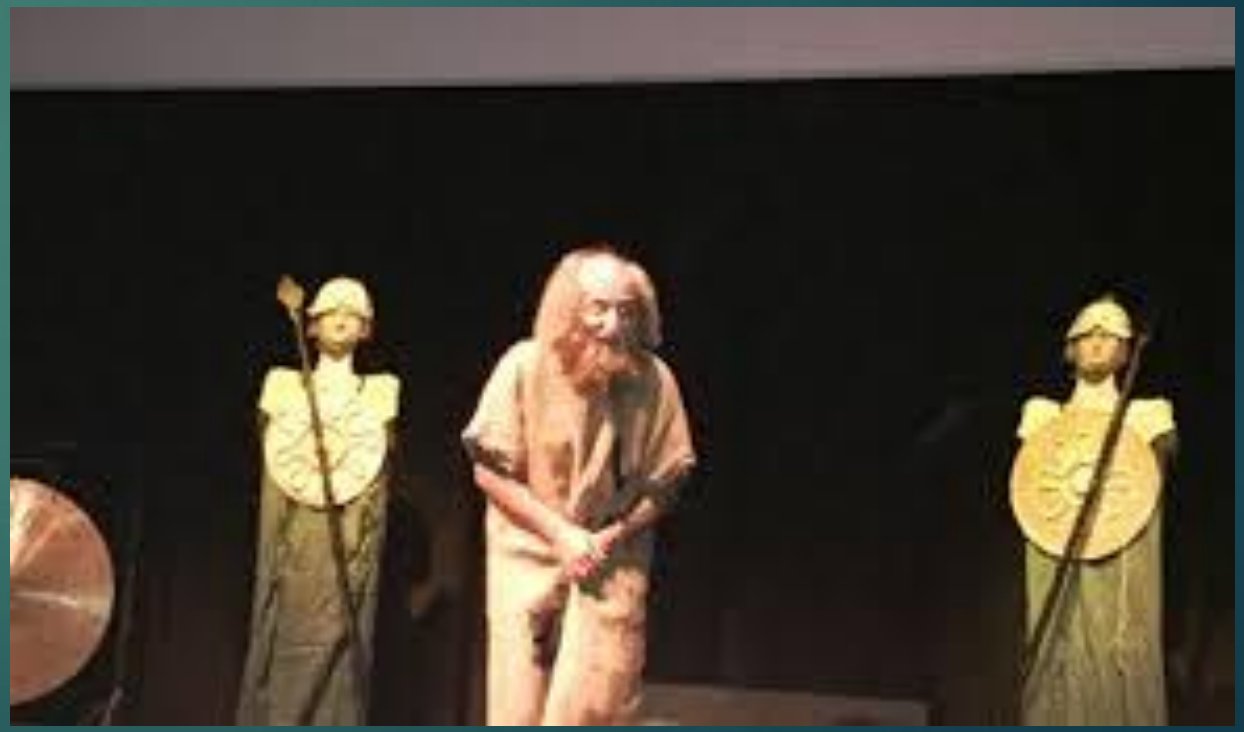
Three Albanian Folk Songs, arranged by the Albanian – British composer, Thoma Simaku were performed by the National Youth Choir of Great Britain, in a program entitled, “Europa Incognito” an at Tonbridge School Chapel in Kent.

NOTES ON ALBANIA Second Edition, King's Place, London

Second Edition of **Notes on Albania.** The event was held under the auspice of Lord McLennan of Rogart and is lead by the acclaimed soprano Inva Mula, pianist Genc Tukici, including spoken word by the British poet and diplomat, Mr Robert Wilton.

Renown actor Mirush Kabashi performing at “King’s Place Theatre”

“THE TRUE APOLOGY OF SOCRATES”



Exhibition of the Albanian painter Bashkim Ahmetaj – IZANO "HOMAGE TO EDWARD LEAR " at The Europe House in London

The Embassy of Albania opened an exhibition on Edward Lear with paintings of Bashkim Ahmetaj. The opening ceremony was presided over by the Head of the European Commission Representation in the United Kingdom, H.E Mss Jacqueline Minor and the Albanian Ambassador.

Albanian wine tasting at the British Parliament, London

The Embassy organized a Wine Tasting Party at the House of Commons. Various Albanian wines from Albania and Kosova such as, *Arbëri, Bardha, Çobo, Skënderbeu, Kokomani and Stone Castle* were enjoyed by all those present.

How the Soft Power helps e new country like - Kosovo

- **Pop Singer Star - RITA ORA**
- **Pop Star - DUA LIPA**
- **Pop Star - ERA ISTREFI**
- **Football Player Xherdan Shaqiri,**
- **Olympic Golden Medallion winner LINDITA KRASNIQI)(karate)**

RITA ORA visits the Albanian Embassy in London

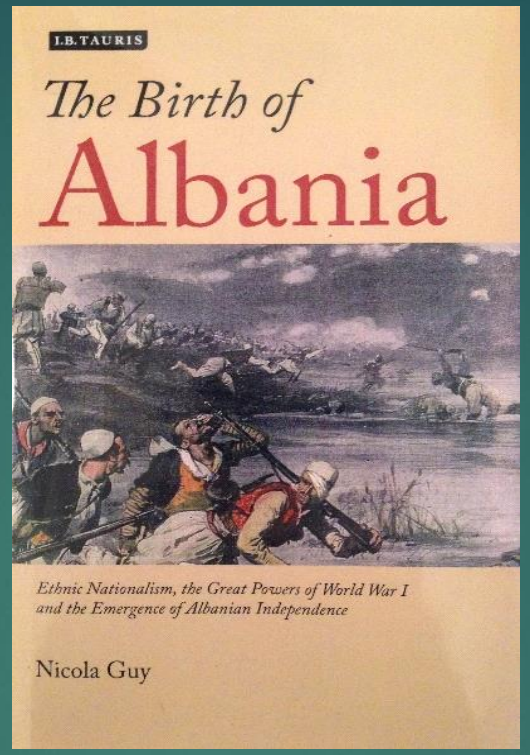
Kosova born, British - Albanian Pop Star, Rita Ora visits the Albanian Embassy. She was welcomed by the Ambassadors of Albania and Kosova, fans from the Albanian community, local and national media.

Albania and Kosova represented by their diplomats at the International Fair of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea

Books of foreign and Albanian authors launched at the Embassies of Albania and Kosova

"Agents of Empire" by Sir Noel Malcolm launched at the Albanian Embassy

Sir Noel Malcolm presents his latest book AGENTS OF EMPIRE at the Albanian Embassy in London in the presence of renown British writers, historians, journalists, academics, and diplomats.
One of most interesting stories of the role that Albanians have played in 16th century between the westerns and ottomans.

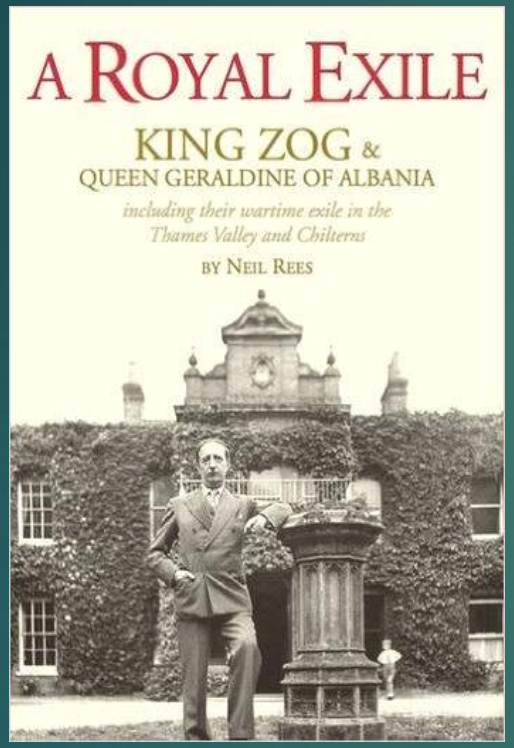


British scholar Dr Nicola Guy launched her book "*The Birth of Albania*" at the Albanian Embassy.

A talk on SPECIAL OPERATIONS EXECUTIVE at the Albanian Embassy

Anglo Albanian Association and the Embassy of Albania host a talk by Dr Roderick Bailey on **"The Wild Province"** dedicated to 53 British martyrs who lost their life in Albania during the Special Operations Executive mission, or the Secret Army of Churchill.

“King Zog of Albania in Exile”: A talk by Neil Rees

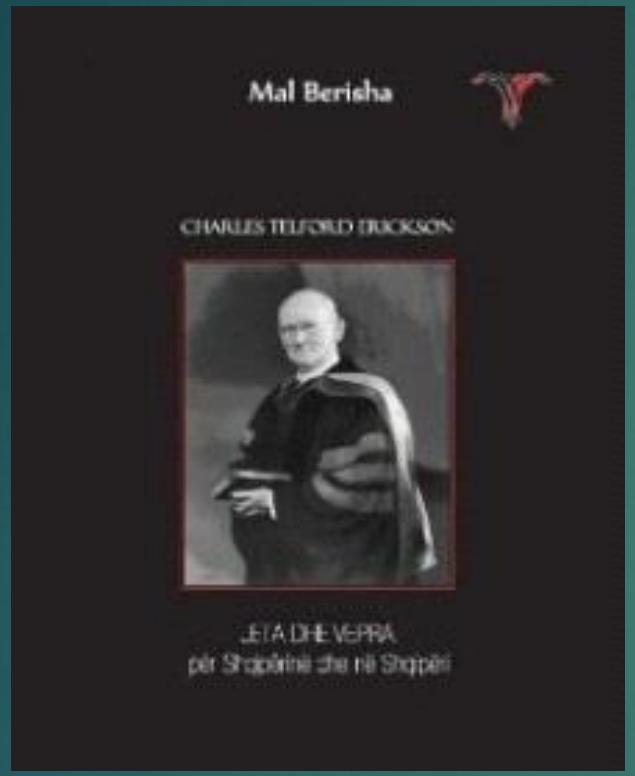


The Embassy of Albania and the Anglo Albanian Association hosted a book launch of “*A Royal Exile*” by Neil Reiss.

The diplomat and writer ROBERT WILTON gives an exceptional talk at the Albanian Embassy

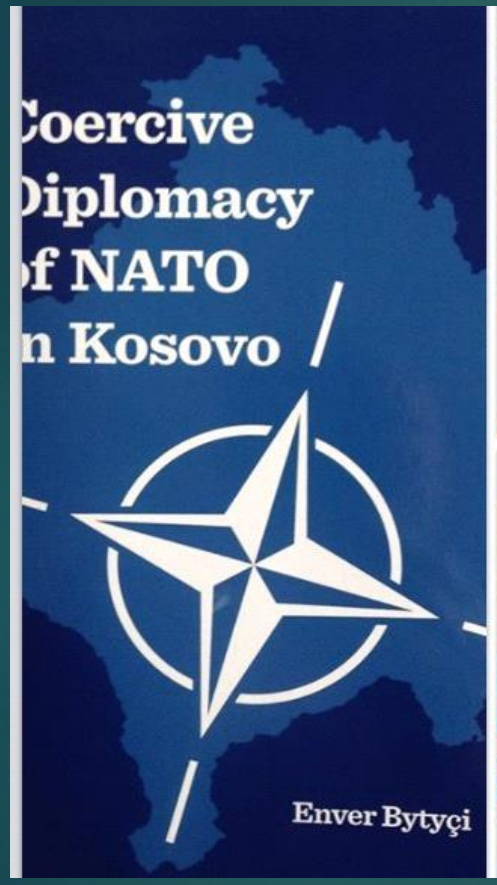
Robert Wilton talks about the Albanian literature and performs Albanian poems translated by him in English. The event includes also a presentation of his book *"The Spider of Sarajevo"* and its parts on the Albanian history.

A book launch: Life of Charles Telford Erickson, by Mal Berisha



The Embassy hosts a talk by Mal Berisha on his book "*Charles Telford Erickson – An American who dedicated his life to Albania*". The book was introduced by Sir Noel Malcolm, Honorary President of the Anglo – Albanian Association.

Launch of the book: "*Coercive Diplomacy of NATO in Kosovo*" by Dr Enver Bytyci



The Embassy organized a talk by Dr Enver Bytyçi, author of the book, Coercive Diplomacy of NATO in Kosovo, in the presence of diplomats, researchers, and members of the Albanian community in the United Kingdom. British MB Mark Prichard attended the event.

A UNIQUE MODEL OF HARMONY

Albania provides a unique model of harmony between the Abrahamic religions where the denominations of Christians and Muslims, as well as Jews, have historically demonstrated the capacity to live peacefully in their joint communities.

FOUR Albanian Popes

- **Pope Saint Eleutherius (175-189)** spread the Bible to many countries of the Roman Empire,
- **Illyrian - Pope Saint Caius (283-296) D**uring His pontificate, Diocletian ascended the imperial throne,
- **Pope John IV (640-642)** secured relics from its troubled churches and built a church in Rome to house them,
- **Pope Clement XI (1700-1721)** Born in Urbano, Italy, in an Albanian family whose forebears fought agisnt the Turks for 25 years.

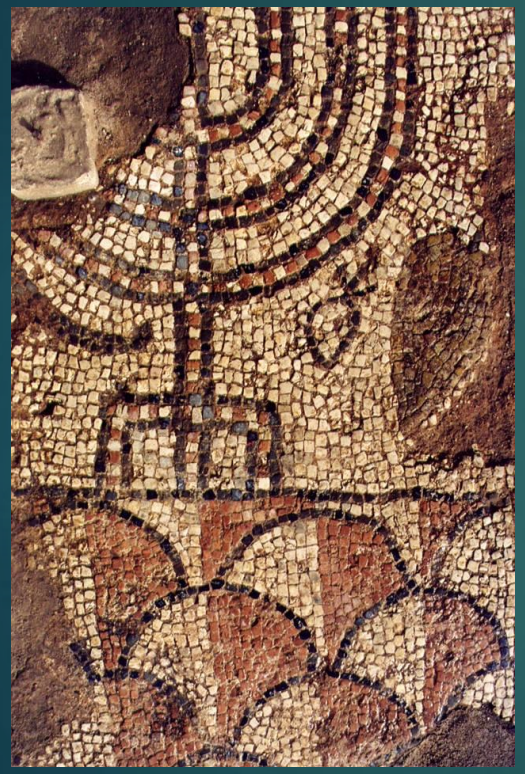
The Cathedral of St. Paul of Tirana. St. Paul preached Christianity in Albania

Islam in Albania - a new and tolerant faith. Mosque in center of Tirana, built up in 1830

Albanian Orthodox Church of Ardenica, (1282) where in 1451, Skenderbeg was celebrated with Andronika Araniti

Bektashism – a liberal Islamic sect – promoter of human love and good understanding

Trace of the ancient Jewish life in Albania

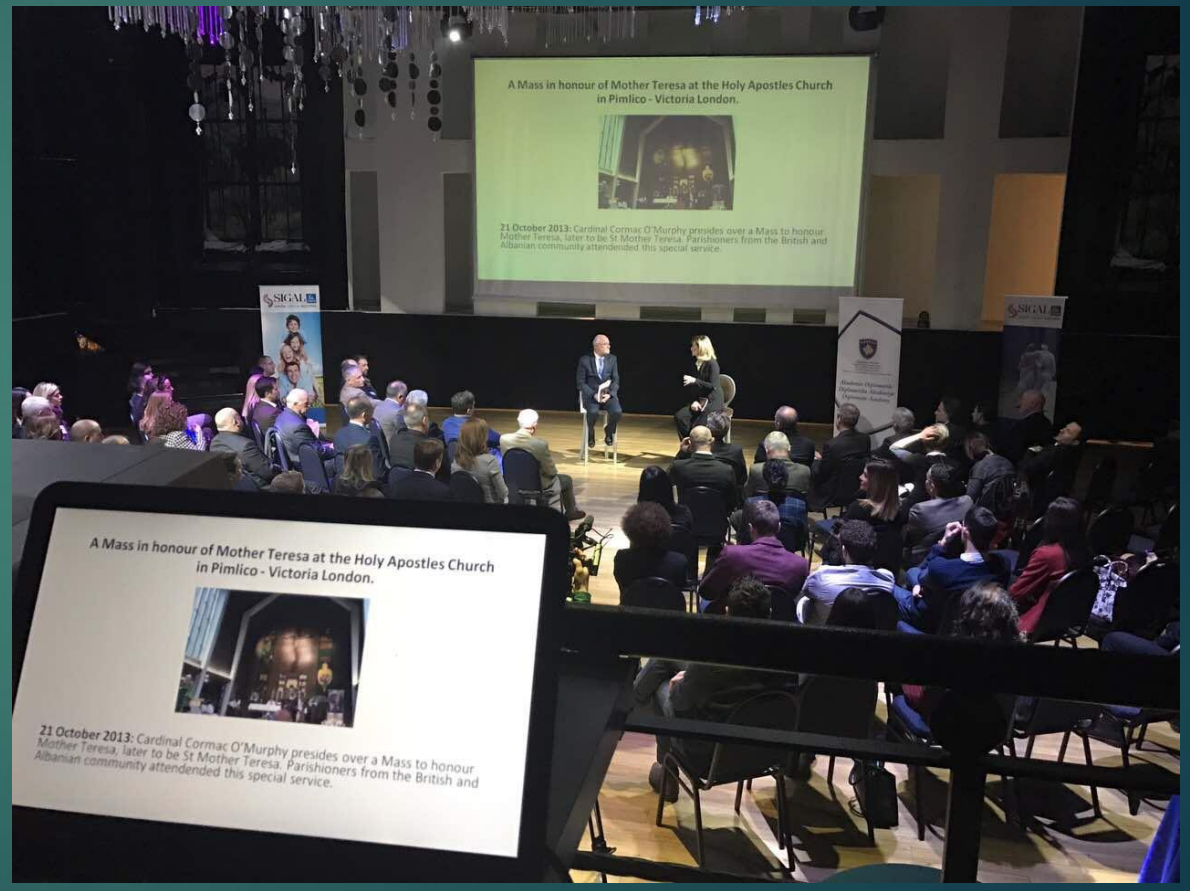


Albania is an example of co-existence between various religions. Upon the arrival of Pope Francis's visit over 300,000 Albanians greeted him at the "Mother Teresa Square" in Tirana. Amongst this group more than half belonged to the religion of Islam

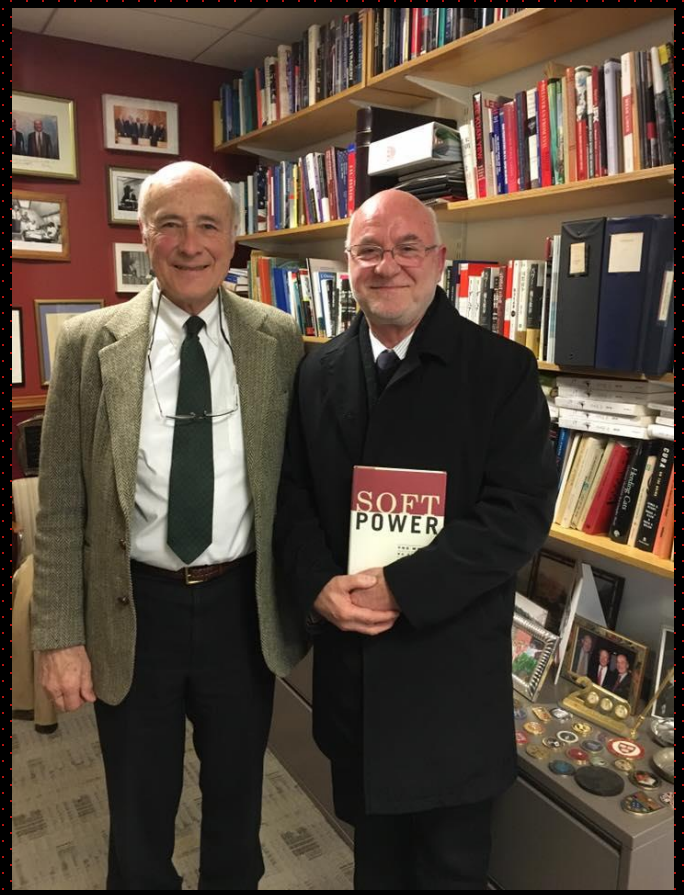
One of the packed audiences of the Embassy's activities

- Soft power is a descriptive rather than a normative concept. Like any form of power, it can be wielded for good or bad purposes. While soft power can be used with bad intentions and wreak horrible consequences, it differs in terms of means. It is on this dimension that one might construct a normative preference for greater use of soft power.

London, New York, Tirane, Prishtine, Geneva….



With the *Soft Power's* "father", Prof. Joseph S. Nye, Jr, during e presentation in the Auditorium Starr in Belfer Building, Kennedy School of Government, Cambridge , Massachusetts, USA.



Thank you from the Land of the Sun, Besa and Hospitality!

www.Malberisha.com